

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W

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O 041945Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 0155

AMEMBASSY LIMA NIACT IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 1483

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PINS, AR

SUBJ: GOA RELEASES TERRORIST

REF: AMB BOWDLER/AMB HILL TELCON; STATE 047646

1. ACCORDING TO LOCAL PRESS REPORTS MAR 4, SERGIO SCHNEIDER, WHO HAS BEEN UNDER DETENTION FOR ALLEGED TERRORIST ACTIVITIES SINCE FEB 23, WAS PLACED ABOARD AN AEROPERU PLANE BOUND FOR LIMA AT 8:00 PM MAR 3. WHILE PRESS NOTES THERE HAVE BEEN NO OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS RE SCHNEIDER RELEASE, THEY "LEARNED" FROM GOVT SOURCES THAT SCHNEIDER HAD EXERCISED CONSTITUTIONAL OPTION GIVEN THOSE HELD UNDER STATE OF SIEGE PROVISIONS TO OPT FOR VOLUNTARY EXILE. MORNING PAPER CLARIN HAS PICTURE OF AEROPERU PLANE WITH ARROW POINTING TO A PERSON THE PAPER IDENTIFIED AS SCHNEIDER. HOWEVER, NO POSITIVE IDENTIFICATION IS POSSIBLE GIVEN DISTANCE AT WHICH PICTURE TAKEN AND ITS POOR QUALITY.

2. EMBASSY HAD CALLED FOREIGN MINISTRY ON AFTERNOON MAR 3 AND ASKED IF THEY COULD OFFICIALLY CONFIRM OR DENY STORIES CIRCULATING IN PRESS CIRCLES THAT SCHNEIDER RELEASE IMMINENT. EMBASSY WAS TOLD THAT SCHNEIDER STILL IN FEDERAL CUSTODY. HOWEVER, WHEN EMBASSY CALLED ON MAR 4 IN RESPONSE TO STORIES SCHNEIDER RELEASED, FOREIGN MINISTRY INDICATED THAT IN FOLLOW UP OUR REQUEST FOR INFORMATION, FEDERAL POLICE HAD INFORMED THEM LATE IN THE EVENING OF MARCH 3 SCHNEIDER NOT IN POLICE CUSTODY. INDEED THIS WAS POSITION MINISTRY TOOK MAR 4 UNTIL EMBOFF READ CLARIN STORY OVER THE PHONE TO CHIEF OF NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION. LATTER SAID HE WOULD LOOK INTO MATTER

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IMMEDIATELY AND INFORM EMBASSY.

3. AP SOURCES HERE REPORT THAT AP IN LIMA HAS ACKNOWLEDGED SCHNEIDER'S ARRIVAL BUT HAVE NOT SEEN HIM AND NOTE THAT HE MADE NO STATEMENT UPON ARRIVAL.

4. FEDERAL POLICE CHIEF MARGARIDE CAME TO EMBASSY MORNING OF MAR 4 TO SIGN CONDOLENCE BOOK FOR CONSUL EGAN AND EXPRESS HIS PERSONAL REGRETS OVER EGAN MURDER TO AMBASSADOR. DURING ONE HOUR CONVERSATION WITH AMB HILL, MARGARIDE SAID THAT SCHNEIDER CASE WAS UNDER JUDICIAL AND NOT EXECUTIVE CONTROL. HE ADDED THAT WHILE HE DID NOT AGREE WITH THE JUDGES DECISION TO RELEASE SCHNEIDER, JUDICIARY, FACED WITH THREAT TO COLLEAGUE, HAD RESPONDED TO ANZORREGUY PLIGHT.

5. COMMENT: POSSIBILITY THAT GOA HAS NEGOTIATED WITH TERRORISTS TO SECURE RELEASE OF PROVINCIAL SUPREME COURT JUDGE ANZORREGUY WHEN THEY REFUSED TO DO SO FOR CONSUL EGAN DEEPLY DISTURBING TO EMBASSY. WHILE IT IS POSSIBLE THAT SCHNEIDER RELEASE NOT LINKED, THE IMPRESSION CANNOT BE AVOIDED AND EMBASSY PLANS WHILE PRESENTING NOTE OUTLINED REFTEL TO VIGOROUSLY AND POINTEDLY RAISE MATTER WITH GOA.

FOR LIMA: ANY INFORMATION YOU HAVE AS TO DISPOSITION OF SCHNEIDER WOULD BE MOST HELPFUL.
HILL

NOTE BY OCT: EXDIS CAPTION ADDED PER MR. JOHNSON S/S-O,3/4/75.

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